

# SCOTLAND'S STORY

40

**Democracy lifts  
its head - and is  
bludgeoned**

**Rise and fall of a  
flawed dictator**

**The Romantics  
arrive like a  
whirlwind**

**Mad massacre  
at Tranent**

**It's all change  
in the oil and  
silver city**



  
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ATLANTIC  
OCEAN



**1784**

Henry Dundas and William Pitt triumph at British General Elections.



NORTH  
SEA

**1789**

The French Revolution has a huge impact across Europe.



**1793**

Lord Braxfield shows no mercy at trials of leading radicals.



**1797**

The Tranent massacre leaves 12 civilians dead and 20 injured.



**1798**

George Mealmaker's United Scotsmen fail to support the United Irishmen.



**1805**

Henry Dundas becomes last person to be impeached in Britain.



**1799**

Scottish Regiments have a prominent role in India.



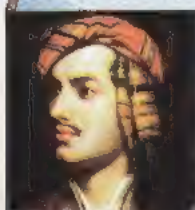
**1815**

Scottish troops instrumental in defeat of Napoleon's France.



**1812**

Lord Byron's literary talent moves Walter Scott to novel writing.



**In Part 41:  
Sir Walter Scott**

PART OF  
IRELAND

North  
Channel

PART OF  
ENGLAND





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# SCOTLAND'S STORY



COVER:  
Lord Byron's  
Romantic  
image is caught  
in this portrait  
by Thomas  
Phillips. Byron  
called himself  
'half a Scot by  
birth, and bred  
a whole one.'

## The spirit of democracy

The French Revolution of 1789 represents a major turning point in Scotland's story. It heralded the beginning of the end for the old regime of monarchs and aristocrats who had ruled over the nations of Europe for centuries. As the great Lord Cockburn observed, the impact of French events on Scotland, both ideologically and physically, was profound.

The 1789 revolutionaries held up the belief that all men irrespective of race, religion, wealth or background, had the same rights, and that the legitimate source of political power was not the will of God but the will of the nation.

After a slow start, these ideals quickly swept through Scotland during the early 1790s and were greeted with fevered excitement by some, dismay and panic by others.

In the repressive atmosphere of the late 18th century, when open expressions of support for radical ideals could lead to penal servitude or worse, it's no surprise that the many reforming societies that set up in Scotland were publicly modest in their aims.

In 1792, the same year that the

second part of Thomas Paine's revolutionary 'The Rights of Man' was published, several of these groups, known as Societies of the Friends of the People were established in Scotland's towns.

It was the beginning of a decade of turmoil that failed to bring about an immediate revolution, but at the same time contributed towards the emergence of modern parliamentary democracy in the century that followed. . .

Before the turmoil caused by the French Revolution, Henry Dundas, 1st Viscount Melville, was unquestionably the greatest 18th century Scottish political manager and an outstanding parliamentarian. His ruthless attitude towards his opponents was tempered by a personal charm and charisma which made him genuinely popular with his contemporaries.

But contrary to the hagiographies of his political life that later appeared, Dundas was neither a political visionary, nor a skilled statesman.

His genius for working in the context of the 'ancien regime' of aristocratic patronage, bribery and corruption was equal to his inability to move with the times.





# DEMOCRACY LIFTS ITS HEAD

An evil spirit, it was called, emerging on a gust of violence. In fact, it was a delicate flower - but it was taking root



■ Moments in the French Revolution, such as the storming of the Tuileries in 1792 – as depicted in this painting by Duplissis – had a profound effect on Scotland. Lord Cockburn wrote that ‘Everything, not this or that thing, but literally everything was soaked in that one event.’



After three nights of riot and disorder in the city centre, the Lord Provost of Edinburgh was not a happy man. It had started with soldiers returning to the Castle being stoned and a sentry-box of the City Guard being set on fire. It had escalated to burning effigies of Henry Dundas, the Home Secretary, and an attack on the Lord Advocate's house, which was only repulsed when troops opened fire.

Undeterred, the rioters were back on the streets the following night to shatter the windows of the Lord

Provost's own house in St Andrew Square before they were once again dispersed by the army.

On June 12, 1792, Lord Provost Stirling wrote to Dundas in dismay: ‘An evil spirit seems to have reached us which I was in hopes that John Bull would keep to himself.’

The Edinburgh riots were no isolated incident. There had been disorder in a number of towns across Scotland around June 4, the ‘King's Birthday’.

Violent protests against toll bars in various counties had been reported and in the far north there were

accounts of ‘sheep riots’, serious disorder and resistance to the introduction of sheep-farming and its attendant large-scale evictions.

Added to the persistent unrest in mining and weaving communities, where workers were organising in ‘combinations’ and demonstrating for better wages, it was a disturbing pattern. Rumbustiousness seemed to be turning to revolution. Dangerous ideas were abroad and the authorities were worried.

The ‘evil spirit’ which the Lord Provost had hoped might have been contained to England was the spirit

of democracy, the heady ideals of ‘Liberty’ and ‘Equality’ which had reverberated around Europe in the aftermath of the French Revolution in 1789.

As the year progressed its symbol, the ‘Tree of Liberty’, began to appear at the market cross of several towns in Scotland as boisterous demonstrations of support for the Revolution and its principles intensified.

Copies of Thomas Paine's ‘Rights of Man’ – with its startling and provocative assertion that all men were equal and had a right to have a





■ Thomas Paine, from an 18th century caricature, became the spokesman for revolution.

of popular protest. They were friends of the people, but few were actually from the people.

Muir's insistence in tabling, then reading an 'Address from the United Irishmen of Dublin' ensured he was a 'marked man' in the reports of the government spies who carefully monitored the delegates' proceedings. With other 'evidence' of his rebellious activities gathered, he was duly arrested and subsequently tried for sedition.

Shortly thereafter, Thomas Palmer, a Unitarian minister from Dundee was also arrested to face a similar sedition trial.

When English delegates attended a third convention, it was restyled the 'First British Convention', to which the authorities swiftly responded by arresting William Skirving, the Edinburgh secretary, and Joseph Gerrald and Maurice Margarot, the two leading English delegates.

The trials of Muir, Palmer, Skirving, Gerrald and Margarot before rigged and hand-picked juries, the blatant prejudices of the notorious judge, Lord Braxfield, and the stirring speeches of the condemned men to cheering members of the public in packed courtrooms, ensured posterity.

But they did not prevent long sentences of transportation to the penal colony of Botany Bay. Only one of the five ever made it back to Scotland – an old and broken man.

Muir's speech, Gerrald and Margarot's dramatic gestures during arrest and trial, the printed speeches and trial accounts all had a powerful and lasting impact. But caution is needed in handling the retrospective representation of events in the 1790s as being primarily the opening skirmish in the long march of labour or the struggle for parliamentary reform in the English parliament in Westminster. There were other dimensions to this complex and multi-layered struggle.

This was the public face of radicalism. Those transported are remembered as Scotland's 'political martyrs'. Their monument below Edinburgh's Calton Hill reflects their commitment to the cause of parliamentary reform.

It confines their aspirations to Westminster and their means to parliamentary agitation within, rather than against the constitution.

But the movement embraced those

► say in how they were governed, monarchs were unnecessary, and aristocrats were parasites – circulated widely. Democracy, republicanism and ordinary men and women thinking for themselves. The very basis of the British state and its established social order was being challenged.

The reports of French agents and government spies suggest that the popular will for radical change was

widespread and firmly grounded. But how popular and how revolutionary was it? And how distinctively Scottish was it? Historians continue to differ in their assessments of the limited evidence.

The organised voice of reform, concerned primarily with political representation and an extended franchise was the Friends of the People – a loose amalgam of reform societies from throughout Scotland,

with Edinburgh at the centre.

The first General Convention of Societies of the Friends of the People was held in Lawrie's Rooms, James Court, Edinburgh, in December, 1792. A radical young lawyer from the west, Thomas Muir of Huntershill, was prominent.

From the start, the convention was divided along moderate-radical lines. The very name reflected the hesitancy of many in riding the tiger

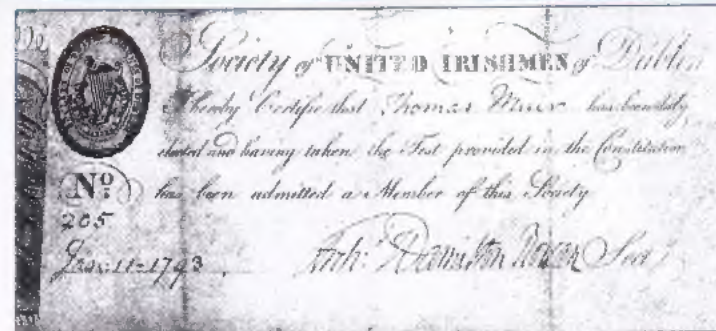


who felt that radical change required radical action, including armed popular uprising. This was the shadowy world of secret societies, insurrectionary plots and government spies, where exaggeration and fear, conspiracy and untested hopes colour the surviving evidence of a subversive underground where little was committed to paper and even fewer could be trusted.

The extent of popular commitment to actual or possible insurrectionary revolt in Scotland, Ireland and England in the 1790s remains a subject of debate. After the arrests, transportations and crackdown of 1794, the more determined went underground. In Edinburgh a group led by Robert Watts, a former government spy, met secretly in Simon Square. They made pikes and other weapons, laid plans to seize the Castle and lead a popular rising, but the 'Pike Plot' was discovered, the ringleaders arrested.

Watts was sentenced to death for high treason and executed in a manner which conveyed an unmistakable message, a public hanging at the Tolbooth with his head cut off and held high with the warning: 'Behold the head of a traitor!'

Repression was not confined to armed insurrectionists. In 1797 several wives and mothers in the



■ Muir's membership certificate of the Society of United Irishmen and (right) his pass from Calais in 1793 giving personal details.

Tranent area gathered in a 'civil rights' protest against government plans to introduce compulsory conscription for a proposed militia to fight the French.

The army was deployed, a detachment of English cavalry sent in and several civilians, mostly women and girls, were killed or seriously injured. Others continued their resistance undeterred.

In Perthshire, a Lochaber man, Angus Cameron, was reported to be recruiting and drilling, with several thousands said to be willing to answer his call when the time came.

There was a further crackdown, more arrests, more transportations. Cameron himself escaped, probably to Paris. He is named in French archives, along with Muir, as one of those who would form a Scottish Directory once a Scottish republic had been declared.

Given the communications, shared

political background and other bonds, it was inevitable that the United Irishmen and their ideas would make their presence felt in the south west and west of Scotland.

However, it was in the east, around Angus and Dundee, that the distinct presence of a United Scotsmen organisation, modelled on Irish lines, emerged.

George Mealmaker, who had been arrested on suspicion of involvement in the 'Pike Plot' and who had previously written the papers for which Thomas Palmer had been tried and transported, set out and distributed their Resolutions and Constitution. He was promptly arrested.

At his trial Mealmaker, not surprisingly, played down the significance and true intentions of the United Scotsman.

It cut little ice. Along with other

leaders he, too, was convicted to 14 years transportation.

In the repressive climate of 1790s Scotland, the printed aspirations of the United Scotsmen and other radicals are understandably muted in tone, modest in aim.

In the liberated, if not intoxicating atmosphere of revolutionary Paris, the declarations of Scottish radical exiles took on an openly 'republican' tenor, couched in an unrestrained appeal to Scottish national identity.

Robert Watson warned the Patriots of Scotland: "Think of Ireland bleeding before you and be assured that the same fetters are being forged for you."

Throughout the 1790s, the United Irishmen appealed directly to the Scottish sense of nationhood. The 'Address from the Society of United Irishmen in Dublin' which Muir had read to the inaugural Friends of the

## FROM EXILE TO ADVENTURE ON THE SEAS FOR RADICAL MARTYR

**A**t his state-rigged show-trial in August, 1793, leading Scots radical Thomas Muir was sentenced to 14 years transportation to Botany Bay, a penal settlement in Australia.

Following a lengthy wait in London for a transport ship, Muir finally set foot in the Bay on October 25, 1794. Penal servitude could have been worse – Muir was able to buy a 30-acre farm near Sydney Cove and settled down to farming, fishing and reading. But he didn't put up with Australian isolation for long.

On January 26, 1796, an American ship, the Otter, arrived in Botany Bay to take on fresh water and provisions.

The captain of the Otter, Ebenezer Dorr, met Muir and agreed to take him to his home port of Boston.

After crossing the Pacific to the northwest coast of America, Muir

### Thomas Muir didn't waste time escaping from life in isolation

arranged to be transferred to a Spanish ship.

His hopes that the Spanish authorities in California and Mexico would provide him with a passport to the United States were disappointed. The Spanish officials treated the Scots radical with deep suspicion and arranged for him to be taken back to Spain.

But as the convoy carrying Muir approached Cadiz on April 26, 1797, it was attacked by a squadron of British warships – as Britain and Spain were by now at war.

Muir was badly wounded in the battle and had to be carried to an on-shore military hospital. When the French

learned of Muir's plight they petitioned the Spanish for his release, which was negotiated on September 16, 1797. Muir arrived in France in November, 1797, and was greeted as a hero.

He settled in Paris where he soon began to involve himself again in the cause of reform at home.

Allying himself with James Napper Tandy, one of the leading United Irishmen in Paris, he began to put pressure on the French government to send an army to liberate Scotland.

The French showed interest in Muir's proposals at first, but by the spring of 1798 their military commanders had decided that invasion of the British Isles was not a good strategic option.

Muir's personal commitment to overthrowing the 'tyrannical' British state remained strong, until his retirement to the town of Chantilly, where he died on January 26, 1799.





■ William 'Jacobin' Skirving was exiled to Botany Bay for political 'crimes'.



■ George Mealmaker, a weaver from Dundee, was a leader of the United Scotsmen.

People meeting in Edinburgh in 1792 had opened: "We greatly rejoice that the Spirit of freedom moves over the Face of Scotland."

After praising Scotland's prowess in several fields it observed with approval that Scotland: "Now rises to Distinction; not by a calm, contented, secret Wish for a reform in parliament, but by openly, actively, and urgently willing it, with the Unity and Energy of an embodied Nation."

What gave the address its potency, its appeal and, therefore, its danger, as Muir was soon to discover, was its ringing reminder that the political state of 'Great Britain and Ireland' was a brittle creation of force,

determine their own future.

French spies and out-of-touch exiles can, of course, be accused of wishful thinking. What were the feelings of the Scots themselves? To what extent were Scots thinking 'with the Unity and Energy of an embodied Nation'?

The political thoughts of ordinary people do not survive in the written record, other than obliquely through the reports of spies, government agents and the records of state trials.

These suggest that in addition to the carnivalesque, the anarchic, and the bawdy and obscene debunking of authority, flashes of popular political expressiveness revealed an innate

the established interests of presbyteries and burghs across the breadth of 'respectable' Scotland.

Yet a number of contemporary writers, active participants in those pivotal years, make it clear that a coherent and specifically Scottish position did exist.

Daniel Stuart, who had moved to London from Edinburgh, wrote explicitly of Ireland and Scotland as being 'in the extremities of Empire' and of England as the Empire's home or 'the interior'.

John Oswald – son of an Edinburgh goldsmith and a prominent figure in the Pantheon Club, where his reports from Paris were widely read – became a leading figure amongst the Scots exiles in revolutionary Paris and subsequently died as a Lieutenant-Colonel in the French Army. He cited Rousseau to declare that the nations of Europe were determined to be free and warned the 'Government of England' that they could not escape from this rising desire for freedom.

In addition to the Irish whom 'she has ever delighted to mortify and oppress', there were the Scots who had been: 'betrayed at the union by a vile noblesse, tamed by repeated butcheries into abject submission to the bloody House of H[anover], and delivered over a traffic for pedlars and a prey to ministerial tools.'

This was no anti-English diatribe. Oswald went on to champion the 'numerous classes' of the ordinary English nation: "All have clubbed together their common hatred, and conspired the ruin of their common

## The British state was a brittle creation of coercion and bribery

coercion and bribery.

Being 'British' was by no means the settled will of the people. Indeed, what is striking in the pamphlets, private letters, secret reports of the period is the extent to which all sides make frequent and regular reference to the reality of the 'three kingdoms'.

Successive French agents reported that Scots wanted free of the Union and resented English domination.

As tensions heightened and the possibility of invasion increased, Scots exiles in Paris assured the Directory that in the political crisis an invasion would precipitate, then the Scots would be only too willing to break with the Union and

rejection of the Hanoverian succession, the Williamite 'revolution' on which the constitutional settlement rested.

Even when state repression was at its most intense, the staging of a monarchist and anti-reform play in the Edinburgh theatre in 1794 provoked a riotous response in which the 'loyal' rendition of 'God Save the King' was drowned out by a spontaneous singing of the democratic 'God save the People', the revolutionary anthem and the distinctly Scots and Scottish Jacobite, 'The Sow's Tail tae Geordie'.

Against these popular expressions of rejection must be set the serried expressions of dutiful loyalty from bodies like the Goldsmith's Hall and

oppressor. Already round her grows the storm that shall lay the rotten fabric in the dust."

Oswald's reference to the Scots being 'tamed by repeated butcheries' is a clear reference to the state repression which followed the successive Jacobite risings which are taken to have a national dimension in relation to the Union.

James Thomson Callender – another Edinburgh figure deeply involved in radical affairs and who narrowly avoided arrest for his writings – also adopted an unambiguously national reading of the Jacobite risings, referring scathingly to 'the assassin of Culloden' and adding: "To England, we were for many centuries a hostile, and we still are considered by them as a foreign, and in effect a conquered nation."

Callender, who later went on to play an influential part in American affairs, fiercely attacked England for







■ The martyrs' monument (in centre of picture) is a reminder of a harsh sentence.

its colonial and imperial aggression. Citing the experience of Scotland and Wales, he declared: "At home Englishmen admire liberty; but abroad they have always been harsh master."

Scotland's 'southern masters' had 'extirpated' every industry in Scotland which interfered with their own economic interests.

There was no manufacturing industry except linen in which the English government 'has not fastened its bloody fangs.'

Callender is remarkable for the power of his writing against British imperial aggression from the Pacific to India and Africa.

Nor did Scottish complicity in the British imperial project escape his criticism.

Unless the situation was radically changed, then the victims across the world who had been sacrificed to power, trade, 'the honour of the

British flag, the universal supremacy of parliament, and the security of the Protestant succession' must have the right to wish: 'that an earthquake or a volcano may first bury both islands together in the centre of the globe.'

As conflict between revolutionary France and England intensified, Scottish and Irish exiles in Paris jostled for the ear of the Directory to secure the support of French arms and intervention in the common cause of the 'rights of man'.

Wolfe Tone, the Irish leader, and Thomas Muir violently disagreed. An exasperated Tone declared Muir to be an 'obstinate blockhead'.

The French went with Tone and his plans for a rising in Ireland. But things went badly wrong.

The United Irishmen rose without French support, the 'Year of '98' ended in eventual defeat and brutal

repression. There was no similar move from the United Scotsmen.

Facing different circumstances to Ireland, they were even less organised, arguably more realistic in their assessment of likely success and more sanguine as to the likelihood of French aid materialising.

Weakened by successful government counter-insurgency, sensing the waning of the popular will, or simply lacking the necessary determination or desperation, whatever the explanations, a combination of circumstances in Scotland ensured that in 1798 the United Irishmen were on their own.

Instead Callender's perception of the corrosive consequence of complicity in the imperial project was reflected in County Wexford where Highland regiments in the service of the Crown hunted down their fellow Gaels.

Broken in spirit and health Thomas Muir died in relative obscurity and poverty in a Paris suburb in January, 1799. Radicalism itself did not die, but was subsumed within the class politics of an emergent 'British' working class.

The toast to 'the swine of England, the rabble of Scotland and the wretches of Ireland' faded from memory as the emphasis on the aspirations of the three distinct kingdoms was eclipsed by the enforced uniformity of class and the narrowing of focus to Westminster and franchise reform.

Yet today – as the focus of radicalism returns to the issue of the democratic deficit in an imposed constitutional settlement – the deeper, wider aspirations which the political ferment of the 1790s engendered have a new, fresh resonance.

As a consequence of reading the early appeal of the United Irishmen to Scotland's sense of nationhood, Muir suffered imprisonment and exile.

Yet his name endures as an affirmation of the spirit which the United Irishmen recognised as the basis on which the future would be won:

*"We rejoice that you do not consider yourself as merged and melted down into another Country, but that in this great national Question you are still Scotland – the Land where Buchanan wrote, and Fletcher spoke, and Wallace fought."* ●

## TIMELINE

### 1784

Henry Dundas and William Pitt the Younger triumphant at the British general election.

### 1789

The whole of Europe is rocked by the effects of the French Revolution.

### 1790

Dundas gains control of 34 of the 45 Scottish MPs, securing his place in Pitt's government.

### 1792

June: Edinburgh's Lord Provost writes of 'an evil spirit' of radicalism among the people.

### 1792

December: General Convention of Societies for the Friends of the People held in Edinburgh.

### 1793

February: War is declared between revolutionary France and Britain.

### 1793

August: Thomas Muir tried for sedition and sentenced to 14 years transportation in Botany Bay, Australia.

### 1797

Women and boys are killed by English troops in the 'Tranent Massacre' during a riot against the raising of a Scottish militia.

### 1798

Radicals in Scotland fail to rise in support of United Irishmen.

### 1802

Dundas raised to the peerage, becoming Viscount Melville.

### 1803

Outbreak of Napoleonic War between France and Britain.

### 1805

Dundas is impeached by the House of Commons for misapplying public funds, and is then acquitted.



VISCOUNT MELVILLE

# The flawed dictator

■ Prime Minister William Pitt the Younger addresses the House of Commons – and his friend Dundas is there as usual to lend support. The painting is by Karl Anton Hickel dated 1793.





# who fell from grace

Scotland's 'uncrowned king', they called him at a time when political corruption was a way of life. But Henry Dundas, the arch manipulator, became the last man in Britain to face a charge of impeachment

The triumph of William Pitt the Younger and Henry Dundas in the General Election of 1784 ended the long period of political instability since the accession of George III in 1760

Dundas had already served his apprenticeship in political management in Scotland and, indeed, his expertise in 1784, along with that of John Robinson in England and Wales, greatly contributed to Pitt's triumph

Hereafter Dundas gradually achieved a stranglehold on the parliamentary representation of Scotland, helped by the fact that he was able to secure something that had eluded previous Scottish political managers – a seat in the cabinet plus life appointment as Keeper of the Scottish Signet

His alliance with the Duke of Buccleuch since 1780 had led to the steady advancement of his 'interest' from its home base in Midlothian

Thirteen Scots MPs were returned as Dundas men, in the election of 1780 – and thereafter, astute agreements with local interests raised the number in 1784 to 22

Negotiations with the Duke of Gordon then led to compromises with various groups in the North East, which bore fruit in the General Election of 1790, as a result of which Dundas controlled 34 of the 45 Scottish members. This was a sizable contribution to Pitt's majority and secured Dundas's position in the government.

To get such results the traditional means of persuasion were applied. Patronage and influence were still the staples of successful electioneering, and thus the Keepership of the Signet was of crucial importance to the predominance of Dundas.

Of great use also were the cabinet offices that Dundas held at various times, for each carried considerable patronage. As Treasurer of the Navy

(1782-3 and again from 1784 until 1800) Dundas had a great source of patronage at his disposal. As well as such traditional fare Dundas opened up new pastures of patronage

From 1781 he had been a keen student of Indian affairs and had become well informed about the complex situation that was rising in India through the transformation of the East India Company from a purely commercial venture to one of an expanding imperium

The British government was slow to perceive the significance of this and to appreciate the need for a measure of control over 'John Company'. The Regulating Act of 1773 was far too lax, and Pitt's India Act of 1784 created a Board of Control which gave the British government supervisory rights over the administration of the East India Company's territories

Dundas was largely instrumental in producing this Act, and from the outset he was a prominent member of the Board of Control and subsequently its president. His share of the patronage of the East India Company was considerable, but not as great as has been supposed, though the contribution of the Scots to the development of British India is significant in many ways, civil as well as military

At the height of his career, Dundas's influence in Scotland was paramount. He was, according to his dissident nephew, Henry Cockburn, 'the absolute dictator of Scotland'

In a wide range of activities, advancement could come only through his favour. Those who opposed him found life difficult. But ruthless though he was, Henry Dundas had a personal magnetism which made him generally popular, at least until the furor let loose by the French Revolution swept over the land

Dundas was without question the greatest of the 18th century Scottish political managers and an



outstanding parliamentarian. But was he also a great statesman? Here there is room for doubt.

There is much more to politics than the oiling of electoral machines and adroit manoeuvring, however skilful. There exists, though it is difficult to define, what former President Bush of the United States has called 'the vision thing'.

Here Dundas was deficient. The needs of his political machine tied him rigidly to the status quo and made him a bitter opponent of reform. Yet the need for reform of an archaic and corrupt political system was becoming apparent.

The 'political nation' was then only a tiny fraction of the population. The parliamentary franchise was feudal, the county electorates were small, and in 1788 there were in the 30 county constituencies only 2,622 voters.

The Royal Burghs were also wide open to manipulation, and with their enclosed and self-electing councils they were sinks of corruption. This is amusingly illustrated in John Galt's novel, 'The Provost', but the antics of such as Provost Pawky brought many burghs to the verge of bankruptcy.

Economic progress and the formation of a substantial middle class led to discontent with the rule of Old Corruption. From 1782 onwards, a movement for Burgh Reform gathered strength, but it was opposed by Dundas, who saw that substantial reforms would make the task of the political manager harder.

Ironically, Dundas had begun as a Whig and in 1775 had actually proposed a slight reform of the county franchise in order to eliminate fictitious votes.

In rigid defence of the past he set his face against the future, and the second Tory Party that evolved from the Pitt-Dundas condominium was to pay a heavy price for such intransigence after 1832.

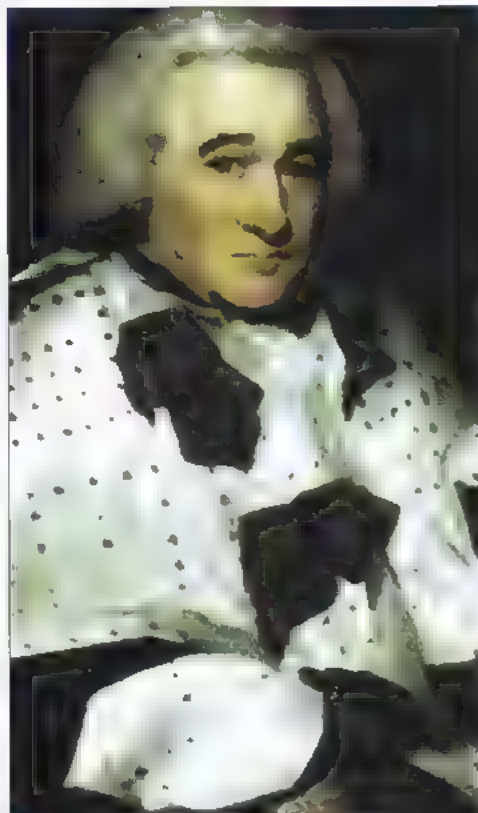
For, like it or not, democratic ideas were in the air. Their birthplace was America, though it is apparently the case that they were slow to germinate in England or Scotland.

But that many people were becoming disillusioned with the existing system is indicated by several considerations.

There is surely some significance in the fact that two of the signatories of the American Declaration of Independence had been born and bred in Scotland.

Then, too, the radical outbursts of the 1790s, inspired by the French Revolution, showed that democratic ideas had seeded in a fertile soil.

Henry Dundas, as Home Secretary,



■ Lord Braxfield showed no mercy towards liberal reformers, such as Thomas Muir.

felt that it was his duty to root out every vestige of democratic or liberal opinion. This is where the Dundas 'Despotism' gained its ill fame.

The measures adopted by government against the reformers were ruthless and indefensible. This was especially the case in Scotland where the so-called State Trials for sedition in 1793-4 were disgraced by the judicial thuggery of the judges, in particular Lord Braxfield in the case of Thomas Muir.

The evidence against Muir, a

navy and the army in the American War of Independence, and it is strange that thereafter he did nothing to remedy the bad state of those services.

On the outbreak of war with republican France in 1793, the navy was again ill prepared, and the conditions of the seamen were so intolerable that the fleets at the North and Spithead mutinied in 1797.

As Secretary of War Dundas was out of his element, his knowledge of warfare and strategy being

## The government was indefensibly ruthless against all reform seekers

young advocate, was weak and the sentence of 14 years transportation to Botany Bay scandalous.

Again, 'the vision thing' was lacking, because the fate of Muir and the other 'Edinburgh martyrs' became not only a black mark for the Tory Party but inspiration for later radicals.

Another sphere in which Henry Dundas failed to shine was as Secretary of State for War until 1801, in which year he resigned with Pitt over the king's refusal to countenance Roman Catholic Emancipation.

As Treasurer of the Navy in 1782-83, he must have been cognisant of the poor performance of both the

negligible. He missed opportunities as they arose and persisted in mounting massive campaigns that achieved little but lost many men, such as those in the West Indies.

Pitt and Dundas, too, seemed to prefer generals of the old school who were past it rather than younger men of action such as Sir John Moore or Arthur Wellesley, who was later to become the great Duke of Wellington.

As Secretary for War, Dundas was a flop. Indeed, Pitt's government was never properly geared up for war, and he relied too much on the hard-working but ineffective Dundas.

William Pitt the Younger was a



■ Portrait of a political manipulator: Henry Dundas, Viscount Melville spiralled from power to ignominy.

great peace premier, whose aims had been to dynamise the economy by adopting the principles of Adam Smith's 'Wealth of Nations', and by prudent fiscal measures to reduce the National Debt.

The Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars shattered these aims, and Pitt was unable to devise an efficient war administration.

In 1802 Henry Dundas was raised to the peerage as Viscount Melville. He served as First Lord of the Admiralty in Pitt's last administration, but his career ended on a sad note when, in 1805, following a Report into naval affairs, he was impeached by the House of Commons for misapplying considerable sums of public money.

This was the last case of impeachment in Britain. Dundas was tried by his peers in the House of Lords, and acquitted.

Some at the time felt that the verdict was reached without adequate examination of the evidence. Certainly, making free with public funds was then common practice.

At any rate, Melville's political career was over though he continued to lead his interest in Scotland until his death in 1811.

His political interest long outlasted him, and from it grew the Conservative Party in Scotland. ●



"I am half a Scot by birth, and bred a whole one", said Lord Byron with pride. Scottish landscape and folk culture were major influences in his writing. The portrait of Byron is by Thomas Phillips and catches the romantic image of the poet.



Their quest was for the very essence of nature, the majesty of primitive force. Scotland held many of the aces – and Europe embraced it

In the aftermath of the French Revolution, Romanticism swept across Europe like Napoleon's armies, transforming the landscape of culture

In place of the classical antiquity on which the cities of Europe had modelled themselves from the Renaissance, with its emphasis on a mathematical rationality, Romanticism offered a different model of culture – one based on nature, the wilder and more elemental the better, and on the exploration of extremes of emotion

Instead of the lucid world of classical Athens, Romanticism held up as the image of its ideal the mists and the wilderness of the Highlands of Scotland. Scotland became, throughout the 19th century, the essence of the Romantic, a place where the elemental powers of nature could be encountered in all their primitive force

In the Highlands, people could experience that 'sublime' – a sense of awe at the mystery and majesty of the world – which had become, for the Romantics, the ultimate source of the most powerful art

Napoleon and Scotland do not come together accidentally as forces shaping Romanticism, for the book which Napoleon carried on his campaigns was a set of poems that were claimed by their translator, James Macpherson, to be English versions of ancient Gaelic epics, narrated by Ossian, and dating back to the third century

Macpherson's 'Fragments of Ancient Poetry' was 'poetry' quite unlike anything that European society had read before – it was written in incantatory verse paragraphs, full of intense and noble emotion. Almost as soon as it appeared, Macpherson's work was challenged as being a fake, a modern invention of an ancient epic rather than a translation of real ancient ►

# A hurricane of Romantics



► remains. To Macpherson's supporters, however, these poems were evidence of a society which had once been primitive and noble, natural and heroic

Northern Europe could lay claim to just as ancient and just as powerful a literary tradition as that which had come down to us from classical Greece and Rome

Ossian translations appeared rapidly in most of the European languages: the single most influential was that contained within Goethe's 'The Sorrows of Young Werther' (1776), which showed the hero Werther shifting from admiration of the Greek classics of Homer to impassioned commitment to Ossian

Werther was the first great figure of Romantic anguish and his commitment to the Ossianic ethos was to bind the new emotional intensities of Romanticism to the wild melancholy of the Highlands

In European terms, Romanticism is almost always presented as the antithesis of the world of the Enlightenment, but in Scotland it was the Enlightenment which was the direct promoter and pioneer of Romantic ideas

The Scottish Enlightenment developed the conception of history as progressing through a necessary series of stages, leading from primitive societies to modern technological ones. The Enlightenment philosophers argued that the human mind was historical in its formation and that the minds of earlier societies were unlike the minds formed by modern societies.

In particular, the primitive mind was far more disposed towards the imagination than was the modern mind. Not having the abstract thought of science, the primitive mind engaged more passionately and metaphorically with the world

Necessarily the most powerful poetry would be the most primitive

This was the argument put forward by Thomas Blackwell, professor at the university of Aberdeen, in relation even to the classical epics. In his 'Inquiry into the Life, Times and Writings of Homer' (1735), he argued that Homer belonged to a pre-literate society and that the power of his work lay in the spontaneity and imaginative vitality of someone not yet encumbered by the 'civilised' world of ancient Athens

Macpherson's 'Ossian' – perhaps because he had studied Blackwell's work at Aberdeen University exactly matched this definition, and it was in these terms that the

Ossianic poems were to be valued and justified by Hugh Blair, professor of Rhetoric at the University of Edinburgh, in his 'A Critical Dissertation on the Poems of Ossian' (1763). Blair was a key figure in the Scottish Enlightenment but he used the Enlightenment's theories to justify what became Romanticism's cult work. 'The manners of Ossian's age were abundantly favourable to a poetical genius ... Irregular and unpolished we may expect the productions of uncultivated ages to be – but abounding at the same time with that vehemence and fire which are the soul of poetry'

From Blair's defence of 'Ossian' sprang the assumption that poetry was best produced by the uncultivated genius and, within two decades, as though to fulfil that conception, appeared Robert Burns, a modern equivalent of the superiority of the 'irregular' and the 'unpolished' over the educated and the sophisticated

Contemporary 'uncultivated' poets were, however, much more problematic than ancient dead ones, something that Burns' self-proclaimed successor, the Ettrick Shepherd James Hogg, was to discover to his cost in his dealings with literary Edinburgh

What Macpherson had achieved in his Ossianic poems was a version of the 'uncultivated' which was, in fact, very polite: when impolite authors such as Burns and Hogg began to invade this territory, with the bawdiness of Burns' 'The Merry Muses of Caledonia' (not officially republished until 1965) or the disorderly narratives of Hogg's novels and stories, the notion of the necessary value of the uncultivated author was quickly retracted. Burns and Hogg were to suffer constantly the condescension of those who were, in theory, committed to the superior vitality of their 'uncultivated' art

The impact of 'Ossian' was to be felt in all of the arts in Scotland – in the paintings, for instance, of Alexander Runciman who created an enormous room as a 'Hall of Ossian' to illustrate scenes from the poetry

but the doubts about its authenticity were to encourage a more historical approach to the Highlands, one which was to emerge in Jane Porter's 'The Highland Chiefs' (1810) and then, most significantly, in Walter Scott's 'Waverley' in 1814

In 'Waverley' Scott has his English protagonist encounter the Highlands as the living remnant of an ancient



John Gibson Lockhart delved into the experience of extreme personal suffering in Adam Blair, published in 1842.

and heroic civilisation where a bare and 'narrow glen' might 'open into the land of romance'. In Scott's Scottish novels the wild Highlands of Macpherson's ancient poems becomes the wild Highlands of a historical reality, but a reality which appears as a place of enchantment to the stranger, until the consequences of its unruly lack of civilisation are made clear.

If Scott's Romantic Scotland was to be taken as the image of Scotland throughout Europe, Scott's own novels challenged his readers to see clearly the historical limitations of the primitive. The Scottish Enlightenment might be the source of Romantic notions of art but an Enlightenment's scepticism about the value of 'enthusiasm' and of the superiority of the past over the present remained a crucial element in Scott's work. Scott's was always a

qualified Romanticism, though throughout Europe translations of his work into plays and operas as well as poems and novels were to make his Romantic version of Scotland a universal enthusiasm

The other poet who represented the absolute figure of Romanticism in Europe, and one whom Scott was obsessed with as his great competitor for the minds of the reading public, was Byron.

Byron had been born in London in 1788, but he was a member of the Gordon family and was brought up in Aberdeen from the age of four

The influence of the scenery and the folk culture of the North of Scotland was to remain with him. He claimed: 'But I am half a Scot by birth, and bred a whole one'.

Like Scott his imaginative energy seemed to be related to his physical deformity (Scott was lame, Byron





■ The Romantic scene of a 'fairy band came riding on' (above) depicts a section of James Hogg's poem *The Queen's Wake* which celebrates folklore.

had a club foot), and he was to die in the cause of Greek nationalism, training Greek soldiers to prepare to fight the Turks.

Byron's poetry, and particularly the success of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* (1812), was to turn Scott to the writing of novels, since

imagination, produced a deeply distrustful and often satirical presentation of the Romantic hero and the Romantic artist.

The conception of Scotland as a world of Romantic history dominated European art in the 19th century: it was celebrated in music

of classical ballet, he based it on a Scottish setting and Scottish story.

In Scotland itself, however, Romanticism split into three distinct currents, all of which can be seen being drawn together by the late 19th century in the work of Robert Louis Stevenson. First, there was the continued exploration, following Scott, of the romance of Scottish history, which Stevenson explores in works such as *'Kidnapped'* (1885) and *'The Master of Ballantrae'* (1888).

Second, there is the celebration of rustic life, harking back to Allan Ramsay's *'The Gentle Shepherd'* (1725) and Burns's *'The Cotter's Saturday Night'*, which was to shape a view of Scotland as a place of simple, indeed often childish, virtue or of comic rusticity.

It can be seen in some of Galt's novels, such as *'The Provost'* (1822), and in the poetry of exiles such as Charles Murray (Hamewith, 1900) and Stevenson (*'A Child's Garden of*

*Verses'*, 1885). It is this which is often castigated as the source of the 'Kailyard' literature of the late 19th century, with its emphasis on the comedy of small town, rural life.

And third, there is the exploitation of the Gothic, whether in terms of extreme personal suffering (as in J. G. Lockhart's *'Adam Blair'* (1822) or in terms of psychological deformity or fantasy, as in James Hogg's *Confessions of a Justified Sinner* (1824).

Out of this tradition was to come the tales of George MacDonald, whose *'Phantastes'* (1858) and *'Lith'* (1895) are the acknowledged foundations of modern fantasy literature, as well as tales such as Stevenson's *'The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde'* (1886).

Scotland was so central to the development of Romanticism that Romantic notions of Scotland have continued to haunt the world's imagination. ●

## The impact of Ossian was felt even on painting and the novel

he felt he could not compete with Byron's poetry and its creation of the gloomy and sublime figure that came to be known as the 'Byronic hero'.


In Byron, as in Scott, the sceptical rationality of the Enlightenment philosophers such as David Hume, who had proved how limited and dependent reason was on the

in the many settings of Burns' poems; in the operas of Donizetti, Bizet and Rossini, all based on the works of Scott; in orchestral work such as Mendelssohn's *Fingal's Cave*; in painting in the works of Delacroix.

And when Bournonville came to create *'La Sylphide'*, the earliest and most influential work in the canon



# Sweet and stirring



The three pillars of traditional Scottish music are the pipes, fiddle and clarsach. Distinctively they strike a national chord and have become part of our identity

The story of Scotland's instrumental music is one of survival and revival. As in most traditions, fashion and taste have never been static here, for the country's musicians have always been receptive to new ideas from their European neighbours leading to a cultural cross-fertilisation which belies any romanticised notion of some kind of pure, untouched and ancient Scottish musical core.

And yet in spite of its hybrid roots, the nation's 'traditional' music remains distinctively Scottish and has undoubtedly been a major element in the construction of our national identity.

At the dawn of the 21st century there remains a healthy crop of instrumentalists, composing and playing in the traditional idiom whose work is finding an expanding audience throughout Scotland and far beyond.

While a wide array of instruments have been subsumed into this tradition – some of them, such as the guitar, with a much longer association here than is often thought – the three instrumental pillars on which Scottish traditional music stands remain the bagpipes, fiddle and clarsach.

The bagpipes came late to Scotland – for there is no solid evidence of their presence this far north until around the 15th century, by which time they were already a familiar sight and sound throughout much of continental Europe.

Carvings in Melrose abbey and Rosslyn chapel depict single-droned bagpipes, while the 16th-century political treatise, 'The Complaynt of Scotland', lists a number of variations on the theme.

As well as the 'drone bagpipe', reference is made to a pipe of 'ane bleddir' and of 'ane reid' and also a bagless form of pipe which two centuries later Robert Burns knew as the 'stock and horn'.

From the time of their arrival here, there have been a number of versions of the instrument known in various parts of the country, but through aristocratic Highland patronage and eventual adoption by the British army, it is the pìob mhòr or 'great Highland bagpipe' which has achieved the greatest recognition.

■ Doyen of Scottish fiddlers: James Scott Skinner, who brought fiddle music into the 20th century, wore Highland dress for this portrait by Leslie Hunter.



# sounds of Scotland



■ The pipes and drums of the Scottish regiments never fail to stir the crowds as they make their appearance at Edinburgh's Military Tattoo.

and has become such an icon of Scottish culture. Certainly, it is hard to ignore, its long and wide drones and conically-bored chanter making it the loudest of the bagpipe family, and eminently suited to its use as an incitement to battle.

Nonetheless, a remarkable versatility has ensured that its art has not been completely dominated by the military flavour of marches and quicksteps, for at either pole of the musical spectrum can be found the strathspeys, reels and jigs of the old Highland dance music repertoire, and the salutes and laments of the ceol mor or pìobaireachd (pibroch, tradition).

For the past 200 years or so, the hegemony of this version of the instrument has somewhat smothered its cousins to the south of the Highland divide.

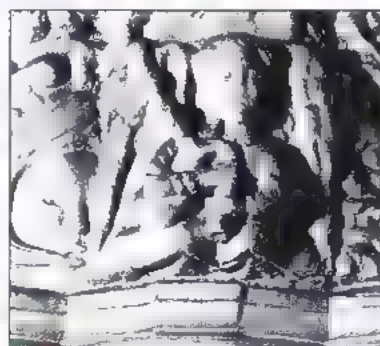
Lacking support from either the military or the aristocracy, the lowland pipers remained towards

the bottom of the musicians' hierarchy, with most being forced to eke out a living as itinerants, while the fortunate few gained positions as official town pipers in the burghs of the central belt and the Borders.

These town musicians such as Habbie Simpson of Kilbarchan, James Ritchie of Peebles and Geordie Sime of Dalkeith, were provided with a house, a uniform and a small annual retainer, and in return were expected to play through the town each morning and evening as well as perform at official functions and ceremonies.

Most made extra cash through playing at weddings, dances and harvest celebrations and in the homes of those who could afford to pay for their private performances.

The instruments on which the lowland pipers played were smaller than those of their Highland counterparts and from the 17th century were powered mainly by



■ A cherub plays the pipes in the 15th-century Rosslyn Chapel.

bellows rather than lungs. The most popular version seems to have been what are now generally called 'border pipes' – conically bored instruments with three drones like the Highland pipes, but rather more mellow in tone and certainly quieter in volume.

Another variant was simply called 'the small pipe', closely related to the Northumbrian instrument of the

same name. One 18th-century commentator saw little of value in this particular version which 'can play nothing which cannot be much better done upon other instruments'.

When in the early 19th century the towns and burghs decided they had more pressing things to spend their money on, such as water provision and sanitation, the lowland piping tradition fell into a sharp decline. With added pressure from the rapid encroachment of the Highland pipes and the rising popularity of the fiddle, by 1900 it had all but disappeared.

Since the 1980s, however, the effort of a core group of enthusiasts has brought about a major revival of lowland and border piping which now stands once again in its rightful place on the main stage of Scottish traditional music.

The history of the fiddle and its music within Scotland is just as ▶



► complex. Thomas of Erceuldoune better known to ballad lovers as Thomas the Rhymer, mentions the 'sethuill' in a list of musical instruments familiar to him in the 13th century which also includes the harp, the cittern, the lute and the rebec, another instrument which was played with a bow.

By the 16th century, the more sophisticated sound of the viol was being heard in the court of James V, its popularity gradually spreading outwards and downwards to 'the folk', where it was used to play for dancing. The instrument which is played by today's fiddlers, however, came to this country in the 17th century as the Italianate violin and began to displace the older forms of fiddle while retaining the existing repertoire.

It was this instrument which in the hands of Niel Gow, William Marshall, James Scott Skinner and thousands of lesser known local musicians up and down the length of the country, fuelled the development of the rich tradition we now associate with Scottish fiddle music.

Variations of localised tastes and influences has led to the development of regional diversity in styles and repertoires of fiddling.

From the 18th century, the North-East became synonymous with the lilting strathspeys of local composers such as Marshall, fiddler to the Duke of Gordon, while in the west a rather more earthy sound prevailed.

There, strathspeys seem to have been given a very different treatment, played much faster with a more regularised rhythm which suited the step dancing tradition of the Gaidhealtachd, and survives still in the Gaelic satellite of Cape Breton.

In Shetland, meanwhile, echoes of the Norwegian Hardanger style merged with indigenous, economical approaches to fingering, derived perhaps from the gùe, an old two-stringed



■ Thomas the Rhymer recites a Gaelic poem to the boy king, Alexander III, drawn by Monro S Orr (1910).

■ From early times drums have played a military role, but this drum was used by Edinburgh's Old Town Guard, policemen of the day, at the beginning the 1800s.



instrument known in Shetland before the arrival of the violin. These roots, added to driving reels, wedding marches and melodies inspired by the ever-present ocean, came together to form a fiddling heritage which remains proudly cherished to this day.

Like Lowland piping, the small Celtic harp, or clarsach, did not survive the onset of modernity intact, and has therefore also required the intervention of revivalists.

Highland societies in both Edinburgh and London were active in this respect in the early years of the 19th century, and although their attempts to revive interest in this music were largely unsuccessful in the short term, the challenge was taken up again by Lord Archibald Campbell in 1892. Campbell commissioned

various instrument makers to construct harps modelled on the so-called Queen Mary instrument, which dates from the 15th century and is preserved in the National Museum.

With the tool of the trade now available, he was able to attract musicians' interest by introducing the harp to the competition stage of the National Mod, of which he was president. With the founding of the Clarsach Society in 1931, the revival was well underway.

But what was it that was being revived? Yet again the early history of the harp in Scotland is complex and uncertain, but researchers have suggested that by Medieval times a

small, triangular wire strung harp was being played here based on a design incorporating features of earlier Pictish and Irish instruments.

Certainly, in the so-called classical period of Gaelic culture, which came to an end in the 17th century, harpers were a common presence in the courts of the clan chiefs for whom they composed and performed 'oran' or song poems to their own harp accompaniment.

One of the best known of these performers enjoyed the patronage of the Macleods of Dunvegan, sponsors of the great heroes of the piping tradition, the MacCrimmons.

Roderick Morison, better known as An Clarsair Dall or the Blind Harper, produced many poems which have survived within the oral tradition, although unlike many of his contemporaries he does not seem to have been a prolific composer of harp melodies.

While certainly 'traditional', the music of the harp cannot really be classed as belonging to the 'folk', for until the 20th century revival, most of its exponents were trained experts playing solely for the entertainment of the aristocracy.

Yet as the piping compositions of the MacCrimmons or the fiddle pieces of James Oswald both reveal, the boundaries between folk and art music have never been clearly marked within the Scottish tradition. While the sound of the clarsach may seldom have been heard in the sod huts and blackhouses of the peasantry, its musical influence has added a distinctive flavour to the Scottish musical idiom.

Of course, many other instruments have found their way into this melting pot, too. The concertina, mouth-organ, and several variations on the accordion all made their mark within the 19th century, while mandolins, lutes, whistles and flutes have had a somewhat longer association with the Scottish people.

But it is surely the pipes, fiddle and clarsach which have done most to bring the 'Scottishness' to the soundscape of this land and which, under the fingers of the current generation of players, look well placed to continue to do so for the foreseeable future. ●

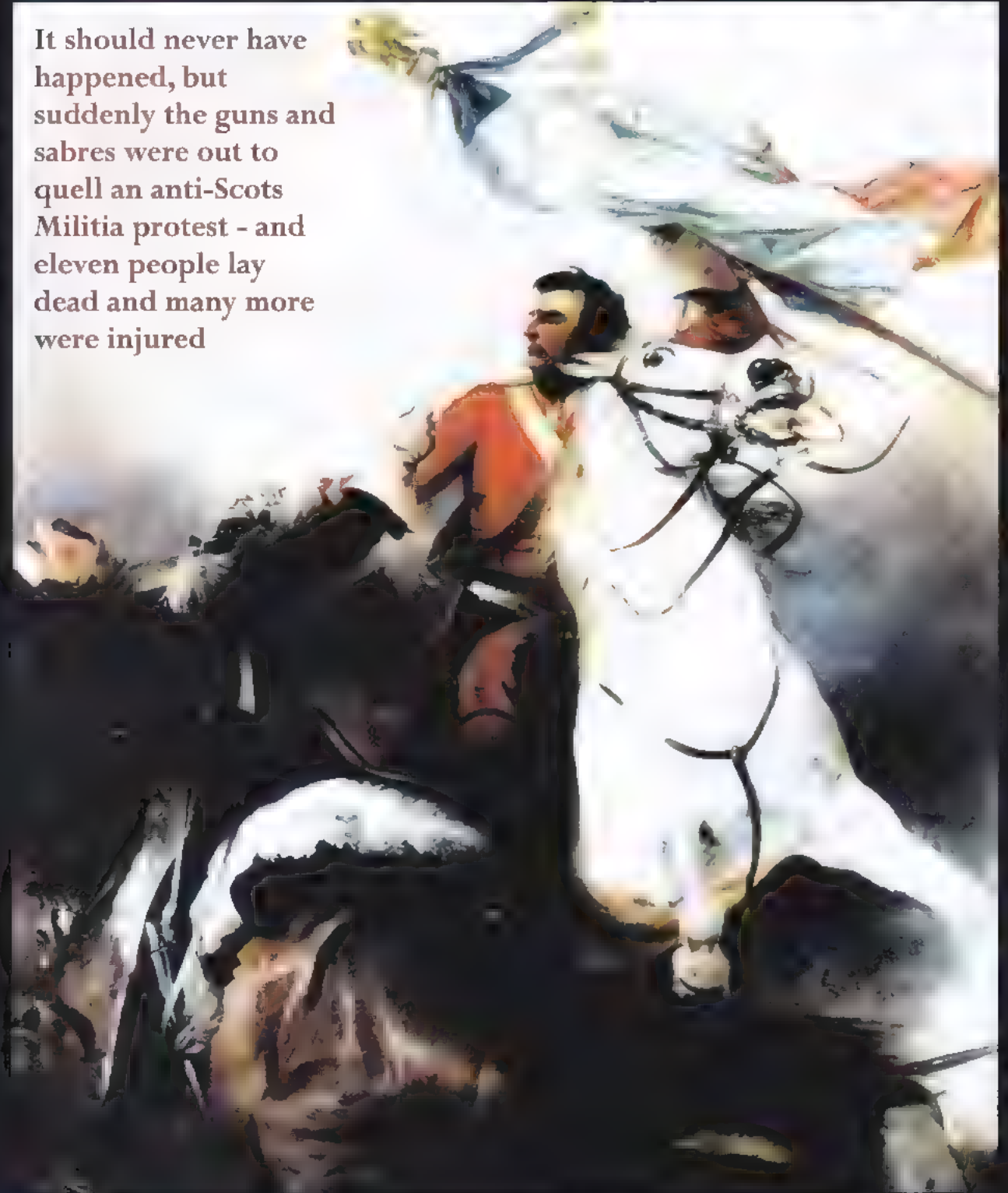


■ These Scottish Lowland pipes, with bellows of wood and leather, date from the early part of the 19th century.



# Massacre in Tranent as 'madness' reigns

It should never have happened, but suddenly the guns and sabres were out to quell an anti-Scots Militia protest - and eleven people lay dead and many more were injured



■ The Scots Dragoons in action: the famous painting by Richard Ansdell shows the capture of the French 45th Infantry's standard at Waterloo, but the Government also needed militias for the home front in case of invasion





■ Tranent today: it is cars rather than dragoons that rule the country town's main street nowadays, and the events of 1797 are all but forgotten.

On Monday, August 28 1797, there was an unpleasant stand-off between a dragoon and some townsfolk in Tranent. It is unclear who was to blame. Tension was high in the town because of an impending ballot for the new Scots Militia.

Some evidence suggests that the dragoon was assaulted, but there were counterclaims of military arrogance. In the event, the matter passed off without injuries. Far worse was to follow.

That evening a crowd of between 200 and 300 demonstrated in the town behind a drum. The local schoolmaster, who was responsible for the parish list necessary for the militia ballot, thought it prudent to leave town.

Tuesday, August 29, was the day of the ballot. From early in the morning the town bustled with officials led by the intemperate local coal-owner, John Caddell of Cockenzie. As Deputy Lieutenant, he was to supervise the proceedings.

Ballots elsewhere had provoked disorder and Caddell and his fellow officials were seconded by a strong military presence: there were some 20 men of the local mounted volunteers, a similar number of

Cinque Ports Light Dragoons, and two troops (about 80 men) of the Pembrokehire Cavalry.

Tranent was a colliery town and few among the tough pitmen and their families had much sympathy for the new militia. There were fears that the fittest of their young men were about to be dragged away in a form of conscription.

The law stipulated that the militia was never to serve outside Scotland, but the local community probably had little understanding of the differentiation between the militia and the army proper.

Moreover it had probably heard stories of earlier broken promises: men who had enlisted in the army on the understanding they would always serve in the regiments of their choice then found those regiments split and fed into others.

Serving alongside strangers, these unfortunates had then been shipped out to the West Indies where the French enemy was as nothing to sickness and disease in taking lives.

The situation in Tranent on that August morning deteriorated rapidly. The officials were jostled as they made their way to John Glen's public house where the balloting was to take place. Stones were thrown.

Caddell allegedly threw stones

back and refused to receive written protests and petitions from local people. Soldiers were injured. They suffered particularly from stones and slates thrown down on them from rooftops.

Caddell attempted to read the Riot Act, though probably few could hear him over the din. The troops were ordered to open fire. The first volley was from cavalry pistols loaded with powder but no ball. Subsequent volleys were fired from fully loaded muskets.

The cavalry were then directed to sweep around the town and mop up the rioters. At this point the Pembrokehire Cavalry appears to have lost control, and it was impossible to recall them since, unlike the Cinque Ports Light Dragoons, they were unused to responding to trumpet calls.

By the end of the afternoon, an unknown number of civilians lay wounded, 11 were dead, another dying and Tranent was in a state of shock.

Several of the victims, shot or sabred during the cavalry sweep to the south of the town, had played no part in the disorder.

The Tranent massacre was the bloodiest incident in rioting that swept through the Lowlands in the

summer of 1797. As one contemporary, Sir Gilbert Elliot, later Lord Minto, colourfully put it: "Scotland went stark mad as if she had been bit by Corsica."

The cause of the trouble was the government's attempt to further tap Scottish manpower by the creation of a militia.

Britain had been at war with Revolutionary France since February, 1793. Her war aims were confused and the war was badly. By early 1797, her Continental allies were falling away.

Ireland was seething with discontent. A French invasion force had been prevented from landing in Bantry Bay only by storms. French troops had landed in Wales, and in the spring Britain's first defence against invasion, the home fleet, had maintained lower pay and conditions - the worst industrial action of the 18th century.

Filling the ranks of the military had been a problem since the beginning of the war.

Broadly speaking, there were three kinds of military: the regular army which could be used for offensive operations, volunteer home defence corps whose members trained, probably, once a week and who were rarely prepared to act



# Fear of invasion and shortage of men made the government turn to Scotland for militia recruits

outside of their own locality, and county militia regiments

When war broke out, militia regiments existed only in England and Wales. They were recruited by ballot from able-bodied men between the ages of 18 and 45, though there were many exemptions

In wartime, the militia regiments were embodied like the regular army but they could not be deployed outside the kingdom

An Irish Militia had been established with similar regulations in 1793. Its creation had been met with rioting, though by 1797 it appeared to be functioning reasonably well

Shortages of men, and fear of invasion prompted the government

to introduce new measures for home defence in England and Wales in 1796 and, at the same time, it was decided to bring Scotland into line with the militia system, though the ballot was only to apply to men aged between 19 and 23

While Tranent witnessed the bloodiest encounter of the Scottish militia riots of 1797, the rioting was most apparent in the arable farming areas of the Lowlands, where there were many small farms and families who feared the impact on their budgets of the departure of young men

Yet the trouble was short-lived. Within 18 months of the riots the Scottish militia regiments were up to full strength

Many young men appear to have preferred the militia to service

elsewhere as it meant they could stay in Scotland. Moreover the regular pay, the food and clothing suited them

In comparison with England, far fewer of the young men balloted in Scotland sought to hire substitutes in their place. The extension of the ballot to men aged up to 30 scarcely raised a murmur

Overall in militia men, volunteers, and regular soldiers, Scotland was to contribute proportionately more men than any other part of the United Kingdom to the British armies assembled against Revolutionary and Napoleonic France

This contribution was to feed significantly into the subsequent

development of Scottish identity and national sentiment

The Tranent massacre had a grim sequel. In spite of widespread outrage and an attempted court case, none of the troopers had to face trial

On the contrary, demonstrators from other parts of Scotland were prosecuted vigorously by Lord Advocate Robert Dundas. In one trial, four rioters from Eccles in Berwickshire were found guilty of sedition by the brutalising Lord Braxfield and sentenced to 14 years transportation

There were two principal reasons for the absence of any action against the yeomanry troopers. The first was a general fear that a victory for Napoleon's France would transport the revolution across the English Channel, but the second owed everything to political power

The patron of the Cinque Ports Cavalry was the prime minister, William Pitt, and its major was Robert Dundas, a cousin of the Lord Advocate ●

## The Highland regiments carved their reputation with battlefield valour

**W**hile covering the road to Quatre Bras on June 18, 1815, in the prelude to the Battle of Waterloo, cavalrymen of the Royal Scots Greys (later Royal Scots Dragoon Guards) attacked a strong column of French infantry.

As they charged, killed infantrymen of the 92nd (later Gordon) Highlanders clung to the horses stirrups, the better to reach the enemy, and the subsequent depictions of the action created one of the great icons of Scottish military history.

With their flying kilts and bearded determination, the Highland soldiers displayed an aggression and raw courage which captured the public imagination.

During the war years, especially in Spain and Portugal, the role played by Scottish regiments enhanced the reputations of the kilted Highland regiments and in so doing made them socially respectable.

Over 70,000 Scots served in the British Army during the period and senior commanders included Sir David Baird, a veteran of the Indian wars, Sir John Moore, the hero of the retreat to

Corunna in 1809 and Sir Ralph Abercromby, who made his name and lost his life at the Battle of Aboukir in 1801, the victory which helped to expel French troops from Egypt.

Besides their direct influence, the Napoleonic Wars were also to have a significant impact on Scottish society and economy more generally.

The conflict speeded-up migration from the country to the towns and cities within Scotland as the demand for labour intensified. However, this meant that after 1815 there was a shortage of labour in the cities.

Meanwhile, rural labour markets became swamped around 1820, not only because of the rapid population growth occurring at the time, but also due to the great demobilisation of sailors and soldiers from the conflict with France.

This situation was further aggravated by the slump in grain prices after the ending of hostilities.

As if that was not bad enough, during the economically-depressed years that followed, a typhus epidemic struck the land, which caused further death, misery and suffering for many ordinary Scots.



The Cameron Highlanders were in the thick of the fighting at Waterloo, where piper Kenneth MacKay rallied the troops.



# Topee and turban... Scots at the heart of India

The climate was lethal, 40 per cent died young, but for administrators, soldiers, doctors merchants and pen-pushers the lure was compelling. The snag was you had to have an East India Company connection

**T**he number of Scots involved in the Atlantic Empire from 1700-1800, be they emigrants, merchants, soldiers, ministers, doctors or others has been calculated in tens of thousands.

These multifaceted links also chime with a somewhat cosy self-image of Scottish involvement in Empire. By stressing images of entrepreneurial merchants, or poor evicted Highlanders, Scots can all too easily represent themselves as not overly involved in the darker sides of British imperialism. They emerge, instead, as either harmless merchants or victimised Gaels.

However, any tendency on the part of Scots to romanticise their imperial connections with India is far less easy

In India, Scottish involvement was of an altogether different character, being primarily a form of elite

migration, with the sons of the aristocracy, gentry and professional merchant and medical classes forming the bulk of personnel

Thus, compared with their presence in North America and Canada, the number of Scots in India was minuscule, numbering not more than a thousand in any given year. Moreover, unlike many of those who crossed the Atlantic, every Scot who travelled to India did so with the intention of returning home

Of course, this depended upon whether they were lucky enough to survive the hazards of the half year trip (one way) and the lethal Indian climate, which generally killed around 40 per cent of those travelling to the East. Inevitably, this meant that India was a young man's destination

Men appointed to the administrative and accounting posts



called Writerships – for instance, were all supposed to be between the ages of 16-19. Similarly, to become a cadet, the most junior military officer, an individual had to be aged between 15 and 21

Yet beyond these differences between the social background of Scots in the Eastern and Atlantic empires, one other point is worthy

of note. To be involved in India an individual had to have connections to the East India Company, based in Leadenhall Street in the City of London

Traditionally, it has been assumed it took well over 70 years after the Union for Scots to break into the highest levels of the Company's affairs. The individual most





■ The good life: David Ochterlony, Boston-born but with Angus roots, decided to 'go native' and acquired 13 wives. When he made an entry into Delhi they followed in retinue on elephants. When Ochterlony died in 1825, a column was erected to him in Calcutta, topped by an onion dome to indicate approval of his adoption of Eastern ways.

commonly associated with this development is Henry Dundas, political manager of Scotland from the 1780s until the early 1800s. Indeed, Dundas was once described in the following terms: "He Scotticised India, and Orientalised Scotland."

There is little doubting that he was the moving force within the

Board of Control which, from 1784, sought to impose the authority of the British Crown over the Company's political and military affairs.

The Dundas era did eventually come to be seen amongst Scotland's gentry as something of a golden age, when the spoils of empire in India were made especially accessible to

Scots. Thus it was that in 1821 Sir Walter Scott noted that India is "the corn chest for Scotland where we poor gentry must send our younger sons as we send our black cattle to the south."

There can be little argument with the fact that Dundas and associates like David Scott, a Director of the East India Company and MP for

Angus in the 1790s, undoubtedly gave employment in India to a large number of fellow countrymen. Yet Scottish involvement in India predated Dundas' rise to prominence by many decades.

As early as 1698 a Scot, William Stuart, was one of the 24 directors appointed to the 'New East India Company' - a trading organisation ▶





The 78th (Highland) Regiment, minus their tails, storm Seringapatam in 1799

► set up by London merchants unable to obtain any influence within the Old East India Company, which had been established in 1600. Under Stuart's influence it was another Scot, Robert Douglas, who was appointed as merchant in charge of all trade goods on board the New Company's first ship destined for China. The importance of Douglas' position can be sensed from the fact that the ship's goods were valued at over £25,000.

One surprising facet about Scottish involvement in India is it commenced quickly after the Union.

In 1722 John Drummond of Quarrell became the first Scot to become Director of the United East

## Half the regiments sent to serve in India were Scottish

India Company. Through his influence, Scots began to find their way to India in some numbers.

By 1727 the Governor of Madras, the Company's second most important base in India, was James MacRae from Ayrshire.

Amongst the earliest Scots in India were doctors. One of the most prominent was William Hamilton, who arrived in India in 1711.

By 1717, Hamilton found himself at the Mughal Emperor Farakhsiyar's court as part of a diplomatic mission from Calcutta, the Company's main

base in India. Plagued with venereal disease, the Emperor bestowed great honours on Hamilton when his medical treatment enabled a planned royal wedding to take place.

Scottish medical expertise remained a feature of British India throughout the 18th century. In Madras the two most prominent mid-18th century Surgeon-Generals were Scots, Dr Gilbert Pasley from Langholm and Dr James Anderson.

Much of the botanical discoveries made at the time were due to the scientific gardening experiments of

another Scot, the Edinburgh University-educated Dr William Roxburgh from Ayrshire.

The era of Britain's first Governor General, Warren Hastings, from the 1770s to 1780s, was certainly a golden age. Hastings unduly promoted Scots such as George Bogle from Daldowie, the first British ambassador to Tibet, because he relied on Scottish MPs to defend him in parliament and at India House in Leadenhall Street.

The result was that Scots posted to Bengal received around half of all promotions – a totally disproportionate display of favouritism.

By the 1790s, although the





James Skinner was an exotic Anglo-Indian of Scottish descent who founded the crack cavalry regiment of Skinner's Horse in 1803 shown here skirmishing with blank ammunition.

Houses, to build up private trading in South and South East Asia

By the mid-1780s one of the top three Madras Agency Houses was owned by a Scot, William Balfour

In Calcutta, meanwhile, the turnover of Fairlie, Fergusson & Co. was in the hundreds of thousands by the 1790s, not least because of their ability to supply shipping for the growing trade in opium smuggling to China

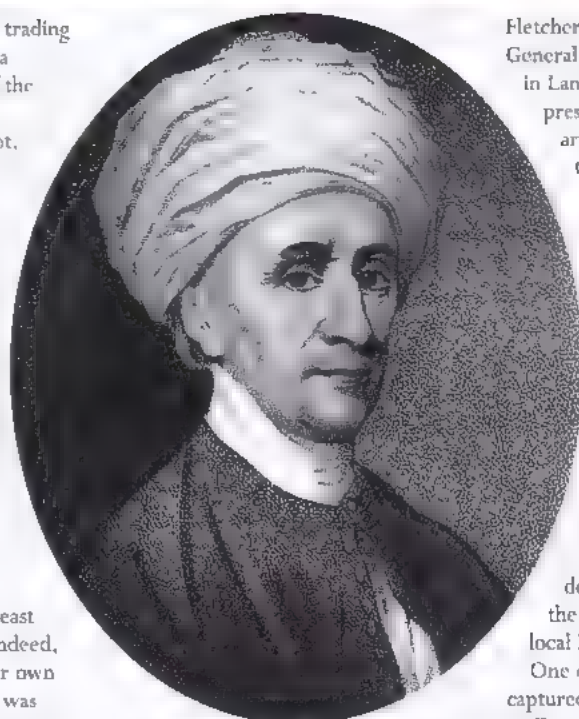
Clearly, there were few areas of British imperial endeavour in the East where the Scots were not making a significant contribution. However, at least in terms of numbers and, indeed, Scottish perceptions of their own role in India, no other area was more important than the military

From the 1750s the East India Company, which had been a largely commercial organisation, embarked upon a substantial military build up. Indeed, the East India Company's military machine grew from just over 18,000 in the early 1760s to almost 150,000 by the early 1800s

The role of the Scots in the emergence of British military dominance in India was disproportionate from the start. In the period from 1754-1784, half of the British army regiments sent to India were Scottish

During the 1750-60 period, Scots made up around a quarter of the officers commissioned into the Company's own force

Thus, despite the fact they were



Patrick Russell studied medicine at Edinburgh before becoming a celebrated naturalist with the East India Company.

under-represented in terms of the ordinary rank-and-file, where they constituted just less than one in 10, Scotsmen were amongst the most prominent British officers and Generals in India

Of the five Commanders-in-Chief of the Madras army from 1776-1786, three were Scotsmen. Nor was the influence of such men entirely helpful

In 1776, in a military led coup, the governor of Madras, Lord George Pigot, was deposed. Prime responsibility lay with Sir Robert

Fletcher from Fife and Major General James Stuart from Torrance in Lanarkshire. Such was the presence of Scots in the Madras army, in particular, that during the second Mysore war from 1780-4 it was commanded by Sir Hector Munro of Novar from Ross-shire and Colonel William Baillie from Dunain in Inverness-shire. Indeed, the Highland element was such that Munro delivered many of his written orders in Gaelic in order to ensure security. However, on September 10, 1780, at the Battle of Pollilur, Baillie's detachment was destroyed by the army of Mysore, the hostile local Indian power

One of the other Scottish officers captured and imprisoned with Baillie, David Baird, had his revenge however, in 1799, when he commanded the right wing of the attack that stormed and captured the capital of Mysore, Seringapatam

Ultimately, India remains the forgotten sector of Scottish involvement in the 18th century Empire. Yet in many respects it was social characteristics that are considered peculiar to Scotland – a numerous but poor gentry, a fine educational system in areas like medicine, and a Scottish tradition of military service – that explain the high-profile role of Scots in India

In this sense, such imperialism was as much a sign of the country's development as any of the perhaps better known examples of Scots in North America or Canada

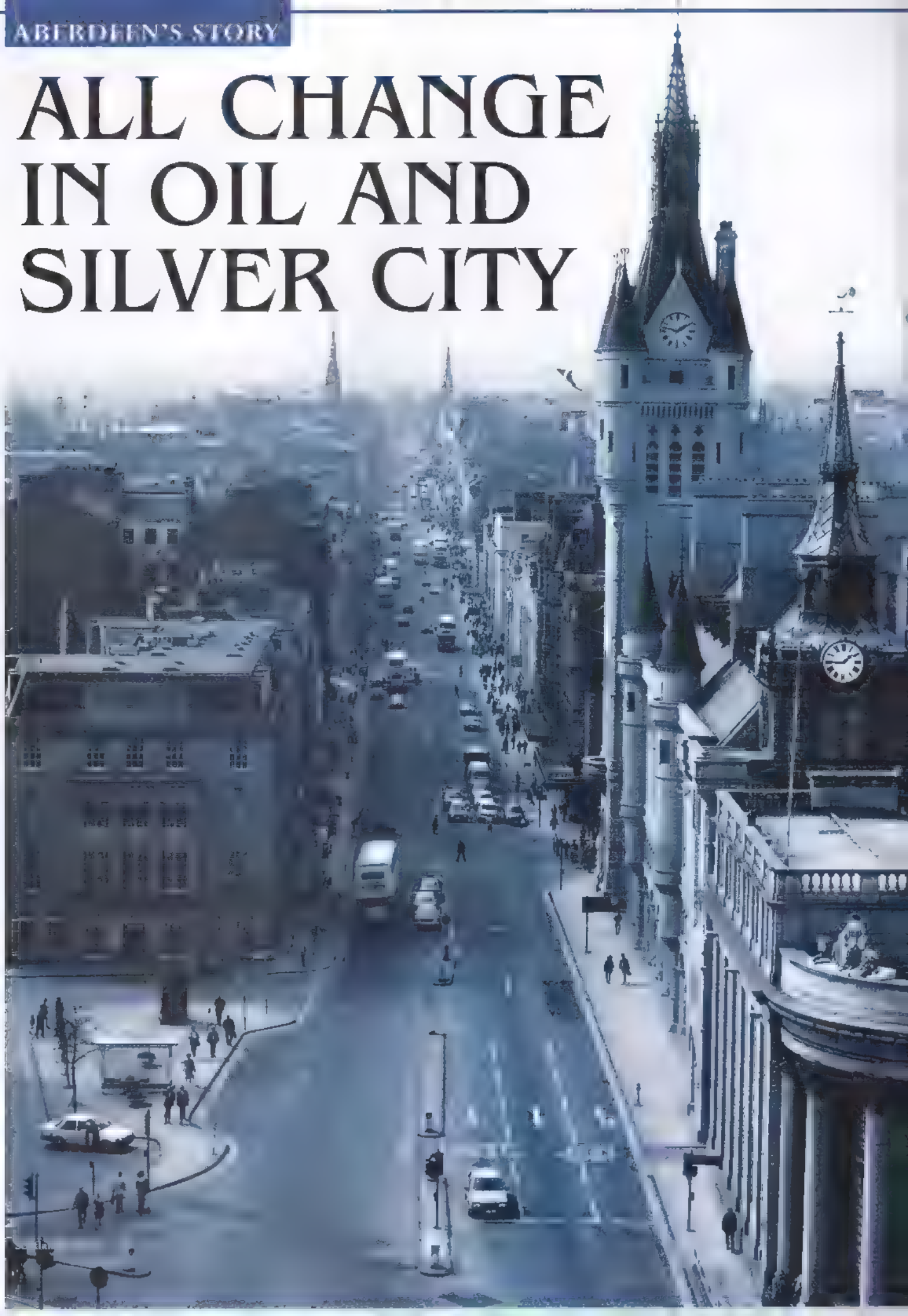
halcyon days of Hasting's regime in Calcutta were gone, Scots appointed to the civil administration of the Company were still making up around 20 per cent of the staff, a far better slice of the cake than their Welsh or Irish counterparts

Another sector of British activity where the Scots were prominent was within local trade between India and areas like the Spice Islands and China

The East India Company retained its monopoly over trade between India and the United Kingdom until 1813. However, after the 1770s, in particular, it encouraged licensed British commercial companies which became known as Agency



# ALL CHANGE IN OIL AND SILVER CITY





■ Union Street was once described as one of the finest in the Empire and created by two local architects. The picture was taken from the top of the Salvation Army Citadel in the Castlegate and shows the old Clydesdale Bank, with its familiar terra-cotta figure of Ceres, the Goddess of Plenty. Behind is the Old Tolbooth and, to the west, the Town House.



■ Queen Victoria, now conducting the traffic at Queen's Cross, gazes wistfully westwards to Balmoral.

## Aberdeen's face is changing fast, but its links with the past have enabled the city to absorb its new role of oil capital yet still retain its couthyness, humour and a propensity to discover 'characters'

Aberdeen grew out of a hole. The deeper men dug, the bigger the hole became and the city with it. Lallans poet Abhastair Mackie once described how he looked down into the hole from a perilous wooden platform on the top of it "a sma' signal platform, wi' its widened snot stuck oot ower the whin bushes." The hole was Rubislaw Quarry, where Mackie's grandfather had worked as a quarryman. "Him and his like for mair nor a hunner year quarried the foonds of a city and raised it to the fower airts," he wrote in his poem 'My Grandfather's Nieve'.

It was a quarryman's nieve (niece), red veined and hardened, and Mackie never forgot it. "In yon auld man's nieve," he said, "grippin his luntin bouwl (pipe) I see the biggin o the hail town."

Today, the town that he helped to build has turned its back on the Big Hole. After two centuries of quarrying, it has become a 500ft tomb in which to bury the past. Warning notices tell you to keep out. There is nothing to show that in that great crater men blasted and cut the stone that made Aberdeen known throughout the world as the Granite City.

But not everyone loved grey

granite, with or without its glitter. John Morgan, the builder, who rode to success on the back of the granite industry, thought that in some lights granite looked "cold, hard, repellent and colourless."

Lewis Grassic Gibbon walked through a cemetery and saw the dead of Aberdeen "lying in serried lines under immense granite monuments." He was moved to "wondering horror."

The Circuit judge Lord Cockburn was even less impressed when he saw the statue of the Duke of Gordon in the Castlegate – the first granite statue in Scotland, now in Golden Square. "This duke's visage," he said, "looks as if it had been rubbed over with oatmeal."

Aberdeen was built on three hills, Castle Hill, Gallowhill and St Catherine's Hill. Multi-storey flats now stand on Castle Hill and traffic chokes the Gallowhill, but the third hill has vanished. It is remembered only in the name of one of the shortest streets in the city, St Catherine's Wynd. Walk into the Wynd and you are standing on what is left of St Catherine's Hill.

When the city decided to develop and expand, it had to build a great new arterial road going west from the Castlegate. It also had to cut through the north shoulder of St

Catherine's Hill, a remarkable feat of engineering. The building of this new thoroughfare – Union Street – set the seal on a century of progress for Aberdeen.

"About a mile long, straight, elegantly edified, well-gemmed with public buildings," that was how the Imperial Gazette described Union Street in 1865.

It was, said the Gazette, one of the finest streets in the Empire. Two architects, Archibald Simpson, son of a merchant Burgess in the city, and John Smith, the first official city architect, created it.

Their stamp can be seen at every step of the way along the street. 'fae the Duke tae Babbie Law' was the phrase by which they measured it at one time. The Duke and his oatmeal face stood at one end of the street and Babbie had a shoppie at the other end. Part of the street was known as The Mat, where generations of youngsters strolled on a Sunday evening looking for a date.

The old North of Scotland Bank (later the Clydesdale) stood at the corner of Union Street and King Street, with a semi-circular classical portico and a terra cotta figure on top looking like Britannia on the back of an old penny. In fact, this is Ceres, the Goddess of Plenty, who seems to fill her role more comfortably since the bank became a restaurant. The name of the architect who designed it looms large on a sign at the entrance – the Archibald Simpson Restaurant.

The bank was built in 1840, but a much earlier example of Simpson's work can be seen on the other side of Union Street – the Union Buildings, begun in 1818 and ►





■ The facade outside the kirkyard of St Nicholas on Union Street with its 12 imposing Doric columns and arched gateway.

► completed in 1822. From there on, Simpson's stamp is on streets and buildings all the way to Babbie Law, with John Smith, known to most people as 'Tudor Johnnie,' close on his heels.

It was Smith who was responsible for the Facade, a screen of 12 Doric columns with an arched gateway in the middle, fronting St Nicholas Churchyard. Before the Facade was built in 1829, the ground was used by menageries and circuses, with jugglers, fire-eaters and dwarfs performing.

Now it has become to Aberdeen what Pere Lachaise is to Paris, a cemetery where the great and the good are buried — authors and artists, provosts and poets, soldiers and musicians. 'Tudor Johnnie' lies near his granite screen and Archibald Simpson is buried in the shadow of the East St Nicholas Church, which he restored in 1835-37.

The street that takes its name from the city kirk — St Nicholas Street — has been so truncated that it is little more than an entrance to the St Nicholas Centre, a shopping complex built in the late 1960s. Its centre was spawned by a Marks and Spencers development which virtually wiped out St Nicholas Street and changed the whole character of this corner.

Tramcars once came rattling down George Street to St Nicholas Street, where they did a turn about at 'the Queen' — a statue of Queen Victoria — and went clanging back to Woodside. In 1964 'the Queen' was

banished to a pedestal at Queen's Cross where she gazes wistfully westwards to Balmora.

In 1989 another vast shopping complex, the Bon-Accord Centre, was opened — stretching between St Andrew Street and Union Street. It was the 20th century's dying salute to consumerism and, some thought, the fulfilment of a prophecy made in 1971 by the late Fenton Wyness, a local author and historian, that the city was about to fall from architectural grace.

Going west up Union Street there is yet another shopping complex, the Trinity Centre. Its name is a reminder that it was originally the Trinity Hall, home of the Seven Incorporated Trades.

The 'Trades' moved to a new hall in Holburn Street and a Littlewoods store moved in. An interesting feature still to be seen in the store's restaurant is the old Mediaeval hammerbeam roof.

The Commercial Union has its office at the corner of Union Terrace, boasting a Doric porch that was known as the Monkey House. People sheltered there from the rain and waited for their 'dates', but romance had no place in the halls of commerce — the 'Commercial' put a gate on the porch to keep the 'monkeys' out.

Beyond Union Terrace are the Assembly Rooms, designed by Archibald Simpson in 1820 as a club where gentry from both town and country could meet. In 1858 the Music Hall was added to the north



■ Many towns the world over have their statue of Robert Burns, but Aberdeen boasts the Bard complete with daisy in his hand.

end of it and the name came to apply to the whole building. It is a major concert venue, and arguably the finest building in Union Street.

So is Union Street still the finest street in the 'Empire'? Is it still 'elegantly edificed and well gemmed'?

The changes in the post-war years

have certainly left their mark on the city's main thoroughfare. The old family businesses have gone and most of the modern superstores have moved away from Union Street to such temples of consumerism as the Bon-Accord Centre and the St Nicholas Centres.

'For Sale' signs sprouted over



empty shops. It was the end of the cinema era and 'picture houses' – with extravagant names like the Capitol (described by architect W A Brogden as a 'restatement of Union Street civic architecture in '30s dress'); the Majestic, which had nothing particularly majestic about it; the Queen's Cinema (originally designed by John Smith as the Advocates' Hall), and the old Playhouse.

Even the Union Bridge has been messed about. The building programme began in 1801, completed in 1805 and widening began a hundred years later.

A mighty statue of King Edward VII stands at the west end of the Union Bridge. Prince Albert was moved out of there by Queen Victoria to make way for her son. He now sits disconsolately at the other end of Union Terrace, not far from where Robbie Burns stands on a high pedestal gazing at his daisy,

## Now even Kelly's stone cats are fewer in number

which for a number of years was routinely stolen by vandals.

At one time you could stand on either side of the Union Bridge and enjoy the view, but the City Fathers in their wisdom decided to build a glossy row of shops on the south side, blotting out the railway below and a glimpse of the hills in the distance.

It was also the end of Kelly's Cats, or, at any rate, half of them. The 'cats' were actually leopards. They got their name from Dr William Kelly, an architect, who used them as filials when he designed new parapets for the bridge. But there are still 14 cats sitting on the north side, where you can look across Union Terrace Gardens to the Central Library, the South Church and Her Majesty's Theatre – 'Education, Salvation and Damnation' they called it.

"Fat hiv ye deen t' my ain native town?" asked A M Davidson in a poem called 'Vandalism'.

Whatever they have done to it, it is unlikely to destroy or damage Aberdeen's image as the Granite City, or to cast a shadow over 'the finest street in the Empire.'

It is carved out of a stone that can be dreich and unfriendly in the rain, but warm and glittering in the sun – 'a town of pure crystal!' was how the poet Iain Crichton Smith described it. ●

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Archaeolink is easy to find. It is situated eight miles north of Inverurie, just off the main Aberdeen to Inverness road (A96) at Oyne village.

Admission: Adults £3.90; children £2.35; and family rate is £11. Special Event Prices: adults: £5.00; children £3; family £14.50. Season ticket: family £25.00; adults £10.00.

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# Martyrs in name of the people



**They are almost forgotten, but when the flame of the French Revolution was burning bright, Scotland's radicals were found 'guilty' of sedition and transported for 14 years to Botany Bay, recounts biker historian David Ross**

**O**ne fact that is worth remembering is that the Press and Journal is the oldest newspaper in Britain. This may come in handy for a pub quiz one day! The next eldest in succession are Glasgow's The Herald, then the London Times.

The spread of the printed word was to create a great interest in radical ideas among the lower classes in Scotland, especially when many newspapers and journals were political, and against the policies of the day. The most meteoric and best known of the radicals of this period was Thomas Muir (1765-1799).

Thomas was born the son of a Glasgow merchant. The family built themselves a house, named Huntershill, in the Bishopbriggs area of Glasgow in 1770, and Thomas was raised there.

The house still stands in Crowhill Road, near Bishopbriggs Railway Station. The original house has been extended, and is used as a pavilion for the nearby playing fields, but the original building in the centre looks very much as it did in Muir's day.

Thomas studied and practised law in Glasgow and Edinburgh, eventually becoming a noted reformer connected with the Friends of the People and the United Irishmen.

His influence in Scotland coincided with revolutionary events in France. He was eventually taken into custody on August 4, 1793, and was tried in Edinburgh on August 30-31 for libel and making seditious speeches.

Much to the shock of many people, he was given the harsh sentence of 14 years transportation to Australia's Botany Bay.

He escaped in 1796, fleeing to

France, where he was regarded as a hero and granted citizenship.

He died there on January 26, 1799, in Chantilly while he was still only 33.

On the opposite side of Crowhill Road from Huntershill House stands a coffee shop and garden centre. A plaque on the front wall of this garden centre tells the story of Muir's life.

A memorial cairn was also erected in 1996, bearing a bust of Muir, and the following lines:

*I have devoted myself to the cause of the people.  
It is a good cause.  
It shall ultimately prevail.  
It shall finally triumph and  
Damned from this mansion to  
a foreign land,  
To waste his days of gay and  
sprightly youth  
And all for sowing with a  
liberal hand  
The seed of that seditious libel  
truth.*

Behind this cairn stands an iron 'Martyrs' Gate' bearing plaques in remembrance of Maurice Margarot, transported for 14 years for sedition in 1793, along with the Rev Thomas Fyshe Palmer, transported for seven years, William Skirving, (14 years) and Joseph Gerrald (14 years).

A tall obelisk to Muir's memory stands in the old Calton Cemetery in Edinburgh, but it is not often



mentioned in guidebooks to the city. It seems Muir is still regarded as 'persona non grata', in many quarters, due to his revolutionary beliefs.

William Skirving was a contemporary of Muir, and hailed

from Fife. The Abbot's House in Dunfermline has a room dedicated to his memory.

This room contains a life-size figure of Skirving sitting at a table, which bears a strong resemblance to existing drawings of Skirving himself.

The Abbot's House also contains a 'commemorative handkerchief' printed with the names of Muir, Skirving and Palmer, which had originally been issued in Australia.

The Abbot's House is a 16th-century building and, as its name suggests, was constructed for the Abbots of Dunfermline Abbey.

It stands hard against the northern side of the Abbey Churchyard, with a museum, shop and cafe within, and is harled in an attractive pink finish.

No visitor to Dunfermline should miss it, coupled with the town's many other historic attractions, such as the tomb of Robert the Bruce, the remains of Malcolm Canmore's tower, and St Margaret's Cave – all within a short walking distance of each other. ●



■ The memorial to Thomas Muir on Glasgow's Crowhill Road.



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Thomas Paine: Fotomas; William Skirving: Mansell; George Mealmaker: HPC; Calton Hill: David Morrison Photography; Membership Certificate & Muir's Pass: Scottish Records Office/AIC Photographic Service; French Revolution: Giraudon/Chateau de Versailles. p10/11/12 William Pitt & House of Commons: National Portrait Gallery, London; Lord Braxfield: National Galleries of Scotland; Henry Dundas: National Portrait Gallery. p13/14/15 Lord Byron: National Portrait Gallery, London; John Lockhart: Central Library of Edinburgh - Hill/Adamson Collection. p16/17/18 Thomas the Rhymer:

Monro S Orr; J Skinner: Dundee Art Gallery & Museum; Edinburgh Military Tattoo: Associated Press - Photographed by David Buchanan; Drum used by Old Town Guard in Edinburgh; SCRAN/ National Museums of Scotland; Pipes & bellows: SCRAN/ National Museums of Scotland. p19/20/21 Dragoons & Kenneth Mackay: NMS; Uniform of Dragoons: ET Archive. p22/23/24/25 East India Company: Bridgeman, India Office, London; Lord Braxfield: National Galleries of Scotland; The 74th Highland Regiment: NMS; Skinner's Horse: India Office Library; Patrick Russell: SCRAN/ Edinburgh University Libraries. p26/27/28/29 Aberdeen: Bob and Sheila Smith. p30 David R Ross.

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# SCOTLAND'S STORY

NEXT WEEK IN PART 41



"The Wizard of the North" they called him – Sir Walter Scott, advocate, poet, novelist, historian, Scotsman extraordinary. His heroic tales and poems of Scotland were the bestsellers of their day. Yet his own remarkable story – adulation, friend of royalty, then financial crash and pledge to pay off his debts with his writing hand – surpasses his fiction.

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